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SI ~~SECRET~~Chile: Accentuating ~~the~~ positive

President **Pinochet**'s intention to give the government a greater civilian ~~cast~~ and to another step in improving China's international image partially explains the Cabinet reorganization announced ¹². His action **also** may have **been** calculated to counter some impressions that he has lost his grip on the government in **the face** of pressing foreign and domestic problems.

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By naming a widely trusted civilian lawyer, **Sergio Fernandez**, to the key Interior Ministry post, **Pinochet** fulfilled a pledge made earlier in the month to give civilians a broader role in planning the transition to **constitutional** rule. **Fernandez**, who served as **labor minister** until late last year, was vested with authority as "super minister" to fill the remaining Cabinet positions. The President also implied that **Fernandez** would have an important role in guiding the transition process.

Of the 16 Cabinet members!, only five are now officers--the fewest since the military intervention in 1973. Each of the four armed services lost a slot. The shift of the ineffective General **Benevides** from the interior to the defense portfolio seems intended to remove him from the critical process of completing a new constitution and organizing a plebiscite to approve it. **Pinochet** has retained the former defense minister, General **Brady**, as a special adviser on defense matters, perhaps with the intention of employing him on high-level missions to discuss Chile's differences with the military regimes on its borders. **Pinochet** is apprehensive about encirclement by potential adversaries, which--together with the damage caused by the **Letelier** murder--is further motivation for his current liberalizing trend.

Hernan Cubillos, a publishing magnate, was named to replace, Admiral **Carvajal** in the Foreign Ministry. **Cubillos** will be confronted with the tough job of managing relations with an antagonistic world and, in particular,

20 April 1978

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of dealing with the ~~sensitive border issues~~ that persist in relations with Chile's neighbors. While Cubillos is considered to be intelligent and aggressive, he has no prior diplomatic experience.

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'In yet another move expected to generate favorable reaction abroad, Pinochet is moving forward with plans to pardon or exonerate persons convicted, paroled, or exiled internally by military courts--a measure that may ultimately benefit about 600 people. This action would clear the deck of practically all remaining cases of punishment meted out for political offenses and go a long way toward accommodating longstanding demands by critics and human rights advocates.

20 April 1978

~~3
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